

FAYETTEVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
Board of Commissioners Regular Session
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16th, 2021, 5:00 PM

Via Zoom

I. Call to Order

The Regular Session of the Fayetteville Housing Authority Board of Commissioners was called to order at 5:00 PM.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Terry, Breashears, and Jones were in attendance, forming quorum. Additionally in attendance: Interim Deputy Director Butler, FHA staff members, members of the public. Commissioner Paxton was not present.

III. Review and Approval of Agenda

Interim Deputy Director Butler presented items to add to the agenda. There was Board discussion as to protocol for walking on agenda items after the Agenda session. The Agenda was approved as amended with two Ayes (Commissioners Terry, Breashears) and one Abstain (Commissioner Jones).

IV. Announcements

Chair Terry reviewed meeting decorum protocols.

V. Consent Agenda

The meeting minutes from November 18 and December 2 2021 were unanimously approved.

VI. Reports

A. FHA Chair – Chair Terry

Chair Terry gave updates on the request to the City of Fayetteville for support on city utilities, with a draft for board approval to be presented at the January meeting. She recommended setting a date for a site visit orientation for the two new commissioners once they are approved by the city.

Reports from Ms. Cauley and the auditors will be discussed later in the agenda.

B. Hiring Committee – Chair Jones

Commissioner Jones spoke about the background check process for the two candidates the board voted to move forward. Interim Deputy Director Butler will provide the names and contact information for the current third-party company FHA uses for background checks.

Commissioner Jones asked if their search would include higher-level fiduciary responsibility. Interim Deputy Director Butler responded that the process was investigated at the beginning of the search for an Executive Director.

There was discussion about adding Ms. Cauley to the Hiring Committee.

C. Staffing Committee – Interim Deputy Director Butler

In Commissioner Paxton's absence, Interim Deputy Director Butler discussed the Staffing Committee Report. The following recommendations to the Board were made:

- i. Consider the organizational chart revisions and TPC job descriptions (once completed).
- ii. Reorganize Staffing and Finance Committee to have the Staffing Chair be the Executive Director or Interim Executive Director and the Finance Chair be the Finance Manager or Chief Financial Officer. A commissioner would be seated on the board but chair duties would fall to the staff member.
- iii. From October 7, 2021: get DEI consultant to work with HR consultant for immediate needs and recommend a consultant for long term in both diversity and inclusion goals

Chair Terry discussed the second recommendation, asking if Ms. Cauley could fill in for the Finance Chair given that the staff positions recommended for it were not filled. Interim Deputy Director Butler agreed and emphasized the need to hire a CFO or Finance Manager.

Commissioner Jones asked about the current vacancies. Interim Deputy Director Butler discussed that vacancies depend on whether the new organizational chart was approved by the Board later in the agenda.

Chair Terry made a motion to follow the recommendation of the Staffing report and reorganize the Staffing and Finance committees to have the chair of both be the Interim Executive Director. Commissioner Breashears seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Financial Committee – Chair Terry

Interim Deputy Director Butler confirmed that the power washing bid would have to be republished due to lack of response. Lindsey is currently working on the September Financials. A working session focusing on the budget is scheduled for the third week in January. The board requested that a colleague of Ms. Cauley, who has CFO experience, join as a guest for the working session.

E. Staff Reports – Interim Deputy Director Butler

Interim Deputy Director Butler went over the recent staff retreat, landlord and community engagement. She reviewed current vacancies at the Public Housing properties and recent efforts by the Voucher program to increase utilization rate, based on information provided by FHA fee accountant.

Interim Deputy Director Butler clarified that our office reaches out to applicants by physical mail to the address on file as per standard procedure.

Commissioner Breashears and Interim Deputy Director Butler discussed the 100 voucher offers that were sent out. He requested the numbers for VASH open vouchers for the next report.

Commissioner Jones asked for clarification regarding the HAP contract process.

There was discussion regarding how the ESG program is structured in regards to eligibility and homelessness.

Commissioner Jones made a strong recommendation of increasing equitable opportunities and identifying community partners that could serve communities of color. Interim Deputy Director Butler requested time to sit down with her and discuss ideas of how to better reach those communities and populations. There was further discussion as to what could be done to collaborate with diverse groups.

F. FHA Development Chair – Chair Terry

A budget will be presented at the January FHAD meeting for consideration. Attorney Crouch is working on FHAD response to Washington County in regards to ERA payments.

The final settlement closing statement had been approved for the property at 1140 N College.

VII. Old Business

A. Update: Lewis Plaza Community Center Kitchen Lease agreement status

Chair Terry noted that the next step is to get the space inspected by the Health Department. Minor issues found would be addressed by the normal operations budget.

B. Review: Organizational Chart

The board did a comparative analysis between the existing and the proposed organizational charts. Interim Deputy Director Butler reviewed the changes in titles as per the Board's conversation at the last meeting. She clarified that under the current chart, there are 9-10 posted job opportunities but that those vacancies depend on what action the Board takes regarding the proposed organizational chart.

There was discussion regarding the scope of work for members of Supportive Services, and who manages grounds/inspections/custodial workers. The latter discussion turned towards chain of command and lines of direct communication, specifically in regards to the maintenance manager.

Interim Deputy Director Butler discussed moving the in-house security back to contracting out due to no change in affordability or efficiency.

Commissioner Jones asked if she was working with TPC on job descriptions and ensuring no issues with the Department of Labor.

Interim Deputy Director Butler suggested that if the revised chart were to be approved, then to have a time frame of implementation so job descriptions could be completed and reviewed by TPC.

There was discussion regarding the scope of responsibilities of the Operations Specialist and Chair Terry recommended keeping the expectations and time constrained to financial support operations.

Interim Deputy Director Butler reviewed the current in-house security budget and compared it to contracting to an outside company. She went over how vacant positions would decrease if the new chart was approved.

There was further discussion of the CFO, staff that would be required to support that role, and salary. Interim Deputy Director Butler wanted to make sure the budget would be able to support both a CFO and a financial manager before adding that position in. Chair Terry proposed authorizing staff to work with the staffing committee, finance committee, and TPC to update the position descriptions and how they would be reflected in the organizational chart, as well as a salary study by the third Thursday of January.

A motion was made to approve the revised organizational chart as a working document and authorize Interim Deputy Director Butler to work with the finance committee, staffing committee, and TPC to do the Salary study by the third Thursday in January for the working session.

Interim Deputy Director Butler updated the revised chart to add another financial position under the CFO position per Commissioner Jones' request. Commissioner Breashears discussed the line of communication for maintenance supervisory positions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

C. Financials

There will be a working meeting in the third week of January to reconcile the previous year's budget, the current budget, and what the future budget might look like.

VIII. New Business

A. Resolution: Supporting re-opening historic Jefferson Elementary as neighborhood public school

Chair Terry presented this resolution and spoke about working with the community and families that would attend that school.

Chair Terry made the motion that the Fayetteville Housing Authority Board of Commissioners adopt the formal position of supporting reopening the historic Jefferson Elementary as a neighborhood public school. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

B. Employee Salaries

i. Resolution: Authorization to engage NAHRO for salary study

Interim Deputy Director Butler has a recommendation from Ms. Cauley to utilize NAHRO for a salary study. She reviewed the proposal, and discussed where in the budget this cost would come from.

There was further discussion regarding budgeting and turnaround time. Chair Terry made a motion to authorize staff to go forward with the NAHRO micro-purchase contract for a salary and compensation comparability analysis beginning top-down and to be completed before January 17th.

Commissioner Jones asked if they could work top-down and send results for the Executive Director position so she could begin negotiations with the Executive Director candidates.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ii. Discussion: Cost of Living adjustments

Interim Deputy Director Butler brought this up to the board to begin thinking about so it doesn't get delayed like last year. Commissioner Jones stated that it isn't sustainable to continue giving cost of living increases without performance evaluations and wanted an update on implementing performance evaluations.

Interim Deputy Director Butler gave an update on the process with TPC and discussed some of the difficulties. Chair Terry stated that she had a meeting with her and Ms. Cauley regarding this topic and that the staffing committee is actively working on it.

Interim Deputy Director Butler clarified that she would like Cost of Living Adjustments to be considered during the budgeting process. Chair Terry reviewed the timeline of board meetings and when drafts and voting procedures would happen.

Commissioner Breashears supported both performance reviews and cost of living adjustments but wanted to focus on how much the adjustment would be. Commissioner Jones stated that her concern is how the adjustment would stack with the salary analysis and merit-based raises. There was discussion regarding if the NAHRO salary study would include the cost-of-living adjustment.

C. Audit report

Interim Deputy Director Butler stated that both the audit and the corrective action reports for the Board to look over, but that the auditors requested the corrective action plan tomorrow. Commissioner Jones stated that she would not be comfortable authorizing the corrective action plan without having plenty of time to review it.

The audit report was shared publicly as the Board reviewed the findings and discussed the corrective actions associated with them.

Chair Terry made a motion to authorize staff to submit the corrective action plan draft to the auditors. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

D. Motion: Suspend sunset of salary adjustments and temporary appointments until further notice

Chair Terry explained that this motion would apply to temporary appointments such as Interim Deputy Director. She made the motion, Commissioner Breashears seconded it, and it passed unanimously.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 PM.